

## The Brethren Evangelist

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ASHLAND, O., Mar. 30, 1887.

## Convention Explanation.

Number eight, current volume of EVANGELIST, contains the call for a convention of the Brethren church, and now, in number eleven, comes an article containing a string of questions concerning the convention, the number of which has only been circumscribed by the writer's supposed capacity of the Publishing House to furnish interrogation points for his questions. The committee had been enjoined to allow plenty of time to prepare for the convention—that there was much to be done and much time was required to make the needed preparation.

The writer was forcibly impressed with the thought, in reading the interrogations alluded to that while the committee did give plenty of time to prepare, they also gave plenty of time for the readers of the EVANGELIST to forget all about the convention. If it only takes three weeks to forget the principal part of the committee's work, it may be entirely forgotten in six months.

The slayer of the interrogation points in No. eleven should remember that he will be expected to deliver two speeches, at least, on two very important subjects. One of the subjects assigned to him will permit him to explain "how to get the food in the rack," and with his well known intelligence, and with the amount of time he has before him for preparation and consecration of himself to his work, he should be able to explain the matter so well that it would no longer be a debatable question after he gets through with his explanation. Others also have subjects assigned; only a few of them have responded that they are willing to comply with the request of the committee.

All should respond so that others could be substituted in case those appointed could not perform the part assigned them.

The question, "Is it to be a mass convention or a delegated conference?" may have been occasioned by want of clearness in the wording of the call, rather than forgetfulness, but certainly this paragraph, referring to "who shall go to the convention, ministers or laymen," should not be misunderstood:

"4th. That the delegates need not be confined to the ministers or elders, and that the sisters as well as the brethren shall have a voice in its deliberations."

Whether the convention be called a mass or a delegated convention can make but little difference, but it is important that it be fully understood that it is expected that the congregations send delegates to represent them at the convention; and the committee wanted to give the assurance to all others, brethren and sisters, that they would be recognized as co-workers, and would have a voice in the work of the convention. After the convention meets it may be thought best to ask the members present outside of the delegates, to organize, and be themselves represented by a certain number of delegates. This might be thought necessary to be done out of a spirit of fairness to the congregations who have sent delegates, but the committee thought best to make no such ruling.

To forestall the works of the convention is not within the province of any one, nor is it perhaps in the power of any one; but any one who chooses may try his hand in forecasting its work, and his success as a forecaster, will depend upon his ability to produce logical and scriptural arguments for his forecastings.

Neither is there any thing to hinder any one from sending "queries" to the convention, but whether they will be acted upon or not will depend on their fitness; to be decided by the convention. The committee selected, from the reasons assigned by those who favored a convention, (contained in the letters received by it) what they considered legitimate matter for such a convention, and have published the same in the "call." The committee considered that if nothing more were presented than what is mentioned in the call, that alone would serve as a sufficient reason why a convention should be held. But many of the letters received, in addition to reasons assigned by the writers in intelligible language why a convention should be held, appended a string of &c., &c., and etc., etc., which might have exhausted the stock of these characters in the Publishing House to publish them in the committee's call, and would not have made the call any more instructive. They were therefore omitted. It might be in place for those who suggested these characters as arguments in favor of a convention to explain what they meant by them.

The majority of the correspondence and a majority of the committee favored Milford Junction as the place for the Convention. The Brethren church at Milford are highly pleased with the action of the committee in this respect. Ashland would, no doubt have been a better place in some respects. Milford is good enough, providing it can afford facilities to feed and lodge comfortably and economically, one thousand or more people. If this cannot be done, the committee should be informed soon (the sooner the better) and the location can be changed to Ashland at once. The committee delegated the power to do so to Elder Stump and Yoder before it adjourned.

There may not be one thousand to entertain and there may be double that number; but the possibilities as well as the probabilities should be considered. The brethren at Milford must assume the entire responsibility; if they cannot do this they should inform the committee and the location will be changed to the place where there will be no question regarding the ability to entertain.

Under "Things in General, Some Things in Particular," also in No. 11, are said some very good things, but the compositor and proof reader blundered by putting one d more into the signature than belonged there, and the writer was not very "particular" when he said that the convention did not consider us in the East. The convention has not yet been held, brother; but the committee took the East in consideration, but did not forget that there were churches in California and Oregon, as well as in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Our western brethren argued to us that the eastern churches were generally rich and the western members were poor, and one brother insisted that the committee should locate the convention in Kansas, the geographical center of the U. S. The committee also had an elaborate argument before it by a worthy brother from Ind., and who wanted the convention located at South Bend, Ind., rather than at Ashland, and showed by figures what the additional expense would be for 1000 members to go from Indiana to Ashland. There is a west to the Brethren church as well as an east when you consider things in general and some things in particular.

Now we will yet say that we have noticed that the sisters are at work; and "generally" speaking, they are not more "particular" about their work than the brethren, and if the brethren don't go to work and prepare themselves for the work of the convention, instead of finding fault in general and forgetting some things in particular, they (the sisters) will capture this convention, as their step-sisters did the Mexico Annual Meeting. Perhaps they will anyway.

Y.

## A Good Paper.

In our estimation, this number is a very good paper. The article from the Philadelphia church will be interesting, and we commend it as a model article of its character. It is written in an excellent style, and it breathes a Christian spirit throughout, and is not a conglomeration of facts, fancies, denunciations, censures and condemnations, like articles on such themes sometimes are. It was written by the Secretary of the church, but he did not put his name to it and we did not take the liberty to add it. It was sent to us in the name of the church.

There are several articles of correspondence that are interesting, especially the one from Carleton, Neb.

On the inside, the young folks are having a royal time, and there are no signs of a lull yet. There is in the young folk's drawer enough letters to fill two or three pages and Uncle Joe and Aunt Laura are awakening out of their slumber and will have something to say next week to the young writers.

The article by Bro. Copp, on the inside is excellent. He writes in a pure and humble style and we prize his productions highly for their spirit of true devotion and freedom from coarseness, cheap smartness and tinges of vanity.

Bro. Kiefer has written an excellent article on Spiritualism. It is full of points and shows plainly that the Modern Spiritualism is largely from Satan. We are to judge the tree by its fruits, and what fruits have we that this religion is from God?

One of our associates writes an interesting article on the Convention, which opens this important subject for consideration.

Here we will take occasion to say that the convention subject is a most weighty one, and demands our prayerful consideration. Now, when we say *weighty* and *demand* our prayerful consideration, we mean all that the words imply; and we warn the brethren that in the consideration of the subject it is their duty to God and to us younger preachers and the church to write soberly, piously and righteously about this subject that is terrible to angels, and let no attempt be made to get smart in writing upon this solemn matter.

This convention is called for the purpose of doing the Lord's work, for strengthening confidence which is greatly needed, to encourage harmony, to systematize work, to quicken our benevolence in behalf of the cause and toward the brethren. If any man or brother goes there for any other purpose, God will send him away confounded, filled with shame and covered with disgrace. God will not be in any convention that is not set for the defense of his gospel.

We wonder whether Bro. McFaden did not think that hymn books with notes, organs, bells, and a hundred other things used by religious people, are not as old as single immersion?

## EDITORIAL ITEMS.

When ordering a change in address, be careful to give the old address with the new.

Bro. R. K. Binkley, of Huntington, Ind., writes that the Conservatives are uniting with them in holding Sabbath school. This is a return to better things. There is no reason why they should not do so everywhere.

The Lutheran churches of the world that speak the English Language are publishing a common book of worship, or one that will be used by all the churches. The advantages to be secured are uniformity in the order of church services. It would be a good thing for the Brethren to write about a program of service; or for several of the leading ministers to give their order. We do not favor a stereotyped order of services, but it would be an advantage to have a standard order of service known to all the churches, so that when a minister goes into a strange congregation, he is not entirely at sea as to the order of service to be followed. How many of the brethren will write to us their usual order of conducting regular meetings? We would like to hear from Bro. Shaver, Sterling, Wampler, Bauman, Gnagey, Beer, and as many more as will write.

In behalf of the Board of Trustees, we would remind all who have subscribed to the College, to remit the same as soon as possible, as there are claims that must be paid soon.

The third number of the *Investigator* will be mailed this week. It is full of well-written articles, and contains 32 pages as usual. During the year, it will make a book of almost 400 pages of choice reading matter of much value to students of the Bible. Sent to any address for 50 cents per year. Back numbers supplied.

The veteran seed-grower, Mr. J. J. H. Gregory, of Marblehead, Mass., issues this year a rare catalogue of the choicest products of the soil, containing many new varieties. Mr. Gregory's reputation for fair dealing and integrity makes the warranty given with his seeds of unmistakable value; and no grower, either for profit or pleasure, should fail to secure one of these catalogues, which are sent free on application.

Elder Jacob K. Flanner's address is now Fairmont City, Pa. He is the resident minister of the Red Bank congregation.

## From Norton Co., Kan.

The saints at Rockwell City have been greatly rejoicing of late, over the fact that souls have been saved from past sins.

On the last day of February, Elder C. Forney came to us and faithfully worked in the vineyard nearly two weeks, to the best satisfaction of our membership, and also those who are "not of us." The Lord's flock is much revived, and we administered the rite of baptism to seven souls, and we reclaimed two, and also received into fellowship, five souls, from the German Baptist ranks, who were anxious to lay aside man-made creeds, and covenant anew to live faithful to the gospel alone. These members are of good repute, and do add much to the strength of the church at this place.

May God receive all the glory, and Bro. F. our hearty thanks for his much needed help.

This congregation also has arranged so Bro. F. shall preach for us the 4th Sunday of each month this year. May God bless him, so he will be able and willing to do his work well.

M. LIGHTY.

## A Surprise.

Mead has said, "The Christian's privileges lie in pronouns, but his duty in adverbs; it must not be only *bonum* (good,) but it must be *bene* (well); that good must be rightly done."

It is certainly right, and according to the will of God, for members to try to make glad the heart of their pastor, and the members of the Brethren church, of Somerset st., Johnstown, Pa., understand this and did their work not only good (*bonum*) but they did it well (*bene*).

Yes, it was rightly done; Or as young America would say, it was done up brown. Well I don't know whether you can think it or not, but actually about fifty to seventy-five of our friends talked, plotted and arranged for several weeks without allowing a single whisper of it to reach the ears of myself or wife. But I must close this note.

On Saturday evening, the 19th, while I was over in town for my mail, they entered my house, I don't know from how many points, but they all got there. I don't know what my wife did and she says she don't know. So I suppose that will ever be a mystery. But I can tell you what I did. I came back in a hurry to read my letters to sister Sterling, and placing my hand on the latch of my door, I was startled by a confusion of voices within. I stopped, I looked through the glass in the door, I took in the situation and as calmly as could be expected under the circumstances, entered.

Well, our table just groaned under what looked like an avalanche from the Lord's storehouse of temporal blessings, and every face told of a heart of love and well wishes that made our soul glad. And when a late hour came, we read and prayed together and for each other and parted. Our gratitude, which we cannot express, went with all who came and for the many who could not be present but sent their rich gifts. God bless us all.

A. J. STERLING, pastor.